

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTESTANT

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from EACH GRADE LEVEL (grades 1 and 2) may be entered in the Creative Writing District Contest from each school. Each grade level is judged separately in contest, but **only one student from each grade level advances to State.**

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** ONLY THE FIRST PLACE WINNER FROM DISTRICT WILL ADVANCE TO STATE. The second place winner will be the first alternate at State and the third place winner will be the second alternate and replace the first alternate as needed. (See page 8 for complete rules, and see page 109 for an abbreviated chart for contest administration.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** Contestants are given a writing prompt page with five captioned images. Students select from the captioned images and create an original story based on their selections. The stories must use at least one of the captions, but it is not required that all captions on the prompt page be included. The images are provided merely to help the contestant recognize the caption words. **Contestants should make up titles for their stories, but not writing a title is not a cause for disqualification.** A sample prompt is provided on the page that follows these instructions in the *PSIA Academic Handbook*.

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.** The Contest Director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for viewing of the stories and evaluations before awards are presented. Contestants are then given five or **six** sheets of lined contest writing paper. Two Assistant Directors assist with paper distribution and contest organization where needed. (The paper master sheet is included in the District Director materials, to be reproduced as needed.) **Contestants MUST provide their own pencils.** The contest director will distribute prompt pages on which Contestant ID Labels have been placed. Contestants will write their ID numbers in the space provided on each page and number each page of their writing in the upper right hand corner. The director will read aloud the titles of each of the prompts and the instructions on the prompt page to contestants. No other discussion about the prompts will be permitted. Contestants have 30 minutes to write their stories. The director **may** give a 10-minute warning and a 5-minute warning before time is expired and all papers are collected.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES & CONTEST DIRECTORS

• **PREPARATION FOR CONTEST.** Read and follow all instructions provided in the “Information Pertaining to All Contests” section of the *PSIA Academic Handbook*. Observe and practice with students all rules and procedures delineated in the “Instructions to the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Checklist for Graders.” Preparation for the Creative Writing Contest may include review of the material in the current edition of the *Ready Writing and Creative Writing Handbook*, in which sample prompts and state winning stories are published. In addition, this resource provides information about appropriate, constructive comments to write to students on their evaluation forms.

Some of these include:

Very creative. Excellent use of dialogue.
Makes me smile. You might make your story longer by adding more detail about...

Any writing program that is used in the classroom will help prepare students for Creative Writing. Training students to effectively use the writing time will be helpful. For example, they may want to plan a beginning,

middle, and end for their stories before they begin to write. The contest has no minimum word length, and the emphasis in evaluation will be on creativity and interest. A sample of the creative writing individual evaluation sheet is included in this handbook.

• **RATING THE COMPOSITIONS.** **Judges will receive unlabeled prompt pages** and judge each story on the basis of Interest and Creativity (60%); Organization (30%); and Correctness of Style (10%). **Without marking on the papers, a panel of three (3) judges** should attach the evaluation sheet to the front of the contestant’s story and each make comments while taking turns reading it. It is recommended that a skimming and elimination process be used first if more than 16 stories are to be evaluated. ALL stories must receive an evaluation. The top 10 stories should be ranked and rankings indicated on the Contest Roster. Judges are to reach a consensus on the papers ranked first through tenth. **There can be NO ties in this contest.** **Additionally, this is a subjective contest, not an objective contest.** Please do not assign a “score” to the works and then rank them based on the score.



Private Schools Interscholastic Association
CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

SAMPLE 2025-2026

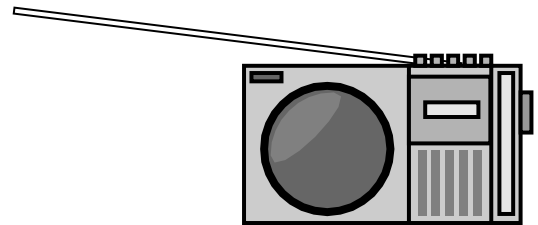
[ID Label will be here at District]

Contestant ID#: _____ Student Name: _____ City / School Name: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a story on your own paper, or paper that has been given to you by your contest director. You must write about at least one of the things shown on this page. Your story may include as many of the things shown as you wish. **Remember NOT to use your name or the name of your school in your story.**



cat



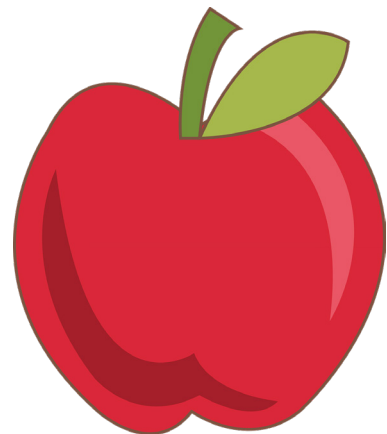
radio



baker



desk



apple

PRIVATE SCHOOLS INTERSCHOLASTIC ASSOCIATION

CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST



Evaluation Sheet
Grade Level: _____



Contestant ID #: _____ Contestant's Name / School: *(Contest Director will pair with prompt page AFTER judging)*

DIVISIONS: Students in first and second grade are eligible to enter the contest. Grades are judged separately.

EVALUATION: The compositions are to be evaluated as to relative excellence in *creativity and interest, organization, and correctness of style*. **Please make comments constructive and supportive. Creative use of prompts in the story should weigh** more than organization, and organization more than correctness of style. The following graph shows the approximate importance of each element.

CREATIVITY & INTEREST-60% ♦ ORGANIZATION-30% ♦ CORRECTNESS OF STYLE-10%

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS FOR THE CONTESTANT:

Judge #1 Comment:

Judge #2 Comment:

Judge #3 Comment:

AREAS THAT COULD BE IMPROVED:

Judge #1:

Judge #2:

Judge #3:

CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

Standards for Evaluation and Ballot

Grade Level: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Judges should see the captioned picture prompts students were given to use in creating their stories. Students were instructed to include as many of the items as they wanted in their stories. The stories must contain at least one of the pictured items, but there is no requirement that they all be included. Judges' comments should be constructive and supportive; however, constructive criticism will help the child improve his/her writing skills and should be included in the evaluation. Stories are to be evaluated as to relative excellence in creativity and interest first, organization second, and correctness of style third. The following graph shows their approximate importance. A number system within these percentages may be created to assist with more objective evaluation. **There can be no ties in this contest.**

DIVISIONS: Students in first and second grade are eligible to compete in this contest. Only if fewer than three students are available to compete at a grade level, should the grades be combined in order that ONE may advance.

CREATIVITY & INTEREST-60% ♦ ORGANIZATION-30% ♦ CORRECTNESS OF STYLE-10%

STUDENTS' STORY TITLES	Contestant ID #	INDIVIDUAL JUDGE'S RANKING
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
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• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____

Make copies for each judge